



# Safe Work and Return to Work Awards

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## Safe Work and Return to Work Awards example entry Category ten – Best individual contribution to rehabilitation and return to work

### 1. Explain how the nominee demonstrates excellence in service delivery and improved return to work outcomes for injured workers and employers

The nominee has adopted and embraced an ethics-based philosophy on return to work. Underpinned by science and knowledge, it involves three core pillars.

- The recognition that the business most valuable assets are its employees, and its commitment to assisting them navigate the return-to-work process.
- The provision of reasonable accommodations for individuals with a physical or mental health injury to enable them to perform the essential functions of their jobs or another appropriate job.
- The establishment of Return to Work program that is interactive, immersive, participatory and possesses a collaborative approach to suitable processes. This allows all stakeholders to explore options and arrive at the best outcomes for the employees.

The pillars are underwritten with her personal values of integrity, compassion, and trust. Her philosophy is transformative. It helps her clients to see the world in new ways, revealing aspects that were previously invisible. Her approach makes a difference to them by providing some light in the darkness or helping them attend to and reflect what's truly important in their life.

The nominee's holistic approach to rehabilitation and return to work is the key difference from others. Her core services and delivery include:

#### Workplace Rehabilitation

- Injury Management and Workplace Rehabilitation across Australia
- Physical and Psychological injury and illness management
- Development and monitoring of return to work programs
- Functional and onsite job task assessments
- Workplace Support Programs
- Health Coaching

#### Claims Management

- Assistance with workers compensation claims lodgement to relevant insurer
- Assistance with lodgement of income protection claims
- Premium management

#### Wellness and Prevention

- Pre-employment medical assessments
- In-house Ergonomic Assessments
- Stretch and Flex Programs
- Onsite Physiotherapy Programs
- Manual Handling Training
- Project Wellbeing Plans
- Individual Wellbeing plans

The nominee's timeliness and professionalism is also a key difference. Nancy ensures she make initial first contact with a client within 30 minutes of notification, so she is there straight away to support them. She recognises that early intervention helps with a quick and safe recovery. As a professional she places equal importance on adopting a biopsychosocial approach and a person-centred approach when planning their return to work. This is so they feel supported and so solutions can be found that work for their individual situation. There is a significant amount of psychologically impacted patients within her portfolio, so she places equal priority with both physical and mental health issues. She can easily identify different moods, personalities and behaviours. She also places emphasis on family members welfare associated with the client and the different type of cultures that may exist between work environments and home environments.

The nominee communicates effectively and positively influences all stakeholders involved in the rehabilitation process. She executes this by keeping a low profile within the life cycle of projects as she is not looking to be the hero who is credited with the brilliant idea or outcome. She educates the team about the relevant "bigger issues" so they have a similar context within which to view the challenges and desired outcomes. She keeps the team focused on describing a successful outcome instead of determining how to get there. Her communication style is flexible so that it can be adjusted based on what the worker best responds to. She actively listens so they have a chance to talk about their goals and suggest their own solutions. Her written style such as letters, emails, and other documents are always personalised.

As the nominee works in a male dominated construction industry where military veterans are engaged, she has adapted a powerful military leadership strategy for civilian success called "Commanders Intent". It gives staff a clear goal and what a successful outcome looks like, but the journey undertaken is up to team members and develops a persona centric plan for each client. This empowers people to be creative and innovative. Nancy is a transformational leader. She has created an innovative culture supporting creativity and outside the box thinking.

She acknowledged that in a civilian environment people don't take orders that well, however if you get those people involved to create the orders then you have a different outcome. By including them, she genuinely co-created a vision of success with the people who were responsible for making it happen. The team then found large amounts of motivation and focus which delivered results and innovation such as the LEWI application.

Her leaderships qualities of honesty, integrity and confidence are the pillars of "Commander intent". Without these values staff will not follow. This produces trust and respect. She demonstrated all of these qualities regularly. She inspired her project teams by setting a good example. She stayed calm under pressure which helped motivate the rest of the team when faced with challenges. She clearly communicated her vision to her team and outlined the strategy to achieve the goals required. Her words supported by her actions have the power to motivate people.

She has been described by her peers as a highly skilled nurturing leader and possesses excellence in project management that goes beyond just designing project charters or detailed schedules. In a short space of time she brought together all the stakeholders and blended their different cultures and lead the team to completion of their goals by managing change well. She has received numerous supportive testimonials from fellow workers which appear in this submission.

Examples of how the nominee communicates & managed an injured worker's return to work that evidences her excellence in return to work and commitment to best practice principles is captured in the following testimonials.

"I have known Nancy for 3 1/2 years as she has helped me recover from several severe workplace injuries. Nancy has helped me through 4 surgeries, physiotherapy, remodeling my work practices as well as helping me with not only my injury home care but also helping me with COVID 19 isolation. Nancy has also helped me with online Lendlease approved training courses that have helped me advance my career upon my return on restricted duties. She has also instituted work practices within Lendlease that will minimise or eliminate similar injuries to other Lendlease employees. Not only has Nancy exceeded herself with helping me with my physical injuries she has also helped me with my mental health. I have always been able to call her & talk when I was not at my best. Nancy has even taken my calls when she has been on leave or on weekends & has spent many of her own hours helping with my recovery. Nancy deserves all accolades possible." Geoff Bell - Lendlease Construction Supervisor.

"Having worked with Nancy Andrian for around 3 years, I have seen on a number of occasions where Nancy puts injured workers first.

A worker admitted to hospital after being diagnosed with a ruptured appendix was being refused treatment as the insurer had not approved the claim. Nancy worked late into the evening to resolve this issue and continued to liaise with, injured worker, hospital and the management team. It resulted in the worker having surgery that evening.

Nancy also works proactively. She has been the pinnacle of information and access to support programs enabling self-care tools being made available the workforce and their management teams. This has included linking Assure Programs with work groups for discussions in toolbox meetings or small group training sessions. Nancy also took the extra step and created LEWI. A one stop tool that links our self-care resources for workers and managers. It hosts a self-evaluation tool with guides to help and support.

Whilst working with the Telco Division, Nancy provided a 2-part solution to assist work teams that were experiencing a rising incident rate. Workers were suffering muscular strains from repetitive manual labour tasks. Nancy outlined a Stretch and Flex program which was supported by an on-site physiotherapist. The project had stretch cards made which became part of the regular workday. All workers could access the on-site physio regardless of any work or non-work related 'niggle'. Over a period of 3 months, this 2-part program facilitated a reduction in events. It also saw the elimination of any medically treated injury. Nancy is always available and is passionate about getting good results for any worker with an injury." Mr Kieron Kelly - Lendlease HSEQ Manager.

A recent example involved a civil landscaper who rolled his ankle when working on a batter. Initially it was simply a report only incident with no medical treatment required. Over time however the injury became worse and eventually required an operation. Transitioning back to regular work activities the nominee ensured that some physical activity was undertaken on work days as working is both good for health of the individual and the business as a whole, she ensured communication, collaboration and education was deployed effectively as the whole work team was tasked with the provision of a sense of community and social inclusion for the individual and she ensured the supervisor gave structure to the work shifts; This allowed all workers not just the individual to feel that they are making a contribution to society and the effected family; it ensured financial security and empowerment to the individual and decreased the likelihood that the individual would engage in risky behaviours, such as excessive drinking as a coping mechanism. Feedback from the individual highlighted that he felt that the nominee had supported the right intervention at the right time and being focused on measurable outcomes gave him a clear pathway.

## **2. What strategies or initiatives has the nominee implemented to improve services or outcomes for injured workers, the employer or the industry?**

The nominee has developed, led and implemented a new program (on-line application) to improve rehabilitation and return to work outcomes called LEWI – Lendlease Employee Wellness Information. This initiative provides a new product for staff to access when first making inquiries into potential health issues identified by workers or management.

The strategy underscores her personal values and plays to her organisational strengths. It has a clarity of purpose and possesses realistic goals. LEWI has been developed as the nominee has identified a sense of urgency and a need by understanding the current culture within the workplace. Her leadership incorporates transparency in the diagnoses of a problem that needed to be solved.

In the last 12 months the nominee has managed just under 60 claims across her portfolio, averaging 25 claims in QLD (work and nonwork related). The COVID19 pandemic has provided extra challenges in the delivery of her strategies and support services to the above claims, however it was fortunate to have occurred at such a time, as it provided the perfect platform to test the authenticity of the LEWI on-line application, which she had designed well before the outbreak. Nancy to support her new on-line application developed "Working from Home" videos and collateral for COVID and bundled it as a HEEP (Home Ergonomics Education Program) pack. Videos depicted a typical day of a Lendlease employee during the COVID-19 and how staff are doing working from home. A number of "Body Booster" clips from physiotherapist and wellbeing specialists created simple and snackable size "BODY BOOSTING" tips to help mind and body of staff when isolated from their normal working environment. It also targeted those that were undergoing return to work plans so they still felt connected and committed to their plans. She developed a virtual "ergonomic" booking form so remote assessments could be conducted. Towards the end of the height of COVID restrictions and in preparation of returning of the workforce to the office she developed a video for staff to help with the transition back to normality.

The on-line application as previous highlighted is called LEWI: "Your guide to the right tools, helping you navigate mental health and wellbeing". LEWI's wellbeing toolkit is the Lendlease digital platform that supports people leaders to take the appropriate steps to ensure the safety & psychological safety of their people. The on-line application's mascot is a "friendly puppy dog" to align not only with the diversity and inclusion framework, so people can identify with LEWI in any way they want. LEWI is also a guide dog. This image supports the perception that the business is with them at all times guiding the user through their journey.

The application provides links to information for products and services that Lendlease offer, to promote and sustain a mentally healthy life and psychologically safe workplace for employees. Access to Foundation products and services, such as MHFA, Brain Bites, Uprise, Sleep Fit and site resources such as the mental health guidebook. It also Provides support resources when an issue arises, or symptoms are present. Including a practical step by step guide for managers. It provides access to Employee Assistance Program & Manager Support Program. It also allows staff to directly connect to People and Culture and Injury Management team. The application also consists of a Link to an "r u ok" video and guidance on how and when to approach someone. It also provides linkage to extra resources external to Lendlease such as Beyond Blue, RUOK, An A-Z library which provides information and specific support to particular topics e.g. Divorce, Nutrition, Suicide, anxiety, transitioning etc.

LEWI's Wellness Toolbox was developed predominately to address pain points faced by site/project-based people managers by providing essential tools that empower them to take appropriate steps in ensuring the safety of their employees. mental health issues are common amongst return to work employees particularly those that have protracted cases or conferences that have been adversarial by nature or perception. It is an application that acts as a portal/gateway to resources, products and services related to wellness, mental health and psychological safety. Whilst targeted to people managers and return to work client, as the application continues to mature and be adopted, the vision is that all employees access this application, providing them with essential information that is easily accessible and user friendly. The target for the initial trial was a 20% participation rate. The nominee achieved a 43% user rate which was double the expected measure.

There were some very interesting measurable results arising from the on-line application. 52% of usage was in the "Prevention" category with most hits overall being the "Self-Care" checklist. Programs for site and foundation tabs were also very popular coming in as part of the top three. 38% of views were in the intervention tab with the most popular click being the

Psychological Risk triage checklist. The most viewed resource in LEWI was the self-Care Quiz at almost 20% of all views. A high participation rate with views every few days indicated an appetite and curiosity around health & wellbeing Self-care and psychological safety which also highlights its importance to LEWI participants. There is a genuine interest in learning more around these topics. Feedback results indicated that participants would "Highly Recommend" using LEWI with an average likelihood score of 7.86 out of 10.

The LEWI application is continuously developing. Key current features and potential features of the LEWI application include.

- Keyword Search button
- SOS button
- AI capability
- Personal user experience with multiple versions – people manager, employee and subcontractor
- Ability to create your own Avatar
- Expansion to cover all wellbeing both physical and mental wellbeing e.g. exercise and nutrition
- To be “talking” to other Lendlease platforms seamlessly, and interactivity/embedded with them
- Call for Help button that connects you immediately to someone.

The following measurable results have been achieved directly impacting the business across a number of disciplines.

- The nominee has driven down the average partial incapacity days in the past 12 months.
- The average cost of claims has halved since 2018.
- The nominee returned everyone back to work with 100% final RTW rate.
- Achieved a stay at work rate of 80%.
- She achieved a reduction in overall claims from 31 claims last FY 2019/20 to 20 claims this financial year.
- Her last year’s average was 14 days total incapacity days.
- 100% improvement of projected Application adoption.
- Average user rating 7.86 out of 10.

Demonstrated evidence of success can be observed in the following testimonials.

"I would like to commend the efforts of Nancy Andrian in supporting our injured workers in Queensland. Nancy is tenacious when it comes to ensuring that injured people are cared for, that appropriate appointments are made, that workers meet their obligations, and that business provides suitable working environments when alternative duties are required. Equally, Nancy also ensures that when dealing with injured workers the best interests of the business are also effectively managed. Nancy maintains a high level of communication with respective business leaders in regard to management of injuries. Making Nancy’s contributions more noteworthy is the fact that this management and numerous interactions have been managed from interstate." Mr Tony Topp, COHSPrac – National HSEQ Manager.

“LEWI provides a critical link between site-based personnel and the information required to provide meaningful assistance to workers, in the palm of your hand” - Alex Coughlan – BMS.

“It’s a great hub of resources. Would definitely recommend it to a worker, especially someone new to Lendlease.

I would definitely use it if I was unsure what direction to take with a worker.” - Brad Reid – ITS Maintenance Manager “I found it very user friendly and would be helpful if needed.” - Catherine Campbell – Office Manager Peninsula Link.

The overall cost of the development of the LEWI application was \$40,000. Compared to most other commercially available applications this has proved to be very cost effective. As the nominee manages protracted return to work cases, she identified that physical injury attract mental health issues and associated challenges. There was a need for a proactive strategy

to address this concern. The impact has been positive for those that have used the application as well as those that manage the whole return to work program. The strategy allowed people to take ownership of their own referrals and research. It provided a conduit that could be reached 24/7. It is a confidence building measure that depicts a caring business and a level of support that is tangible and installs the values of "Excellence, Trust and Commitment."

As a manager who specifically targets the recruitment of veterans from RSL Queensland, in a planned strategy to help ex-military transition to a civilian workforce I have personally benefitted from the nominee's initiative. I accept employees that have been diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder as I now have knowledge and confidence that I can avoid the triggers and identify early signals of PTSD related issues due to the tool that Nancy has provided. This has ensured there are less sick leave days taken by my staff and a team culture that is supportive and empathetic which in its own right is a very useful tool to possess.

"As an Ex Commando who has been diagnosed with PTSD, I have personally benefitted from the support provided to me by my employer. They have made my transition seamless and have shown a very caring and proactive approach to my ongoing wellbeing.

Toolkits such as LEWI shows me that my employer cares." - Mr David Noble - Motorway Response Officer.

### **3. Provide one detailed example that demonstrates the success of the nominee's contribution to rehabilitation and return to work for injured workers and employers.**

Describe the injured worker's role and their day to day activities

The injured worker's role was a Field Supervisor responsible for organising works and the supervision and quality assurance of a small telecommunications infrastructure service team. Their core service activities included electric pit inspections, cable pulling, cable splicing and performing diagnostics on electrical roadside cabinets. Whilst the majority of day to day activities included planned scheduled works, they also perform unplanned corrective emergency repairs particularly after severe weather events.

Provide details of how injury occurred

The worker had injured both shoulders (rotator cuffs) lifting up concrete pit lids (multiple concurrent injuries). Whilst the majority of the lifting process included mechanical aids some aspects required momentary manual handling techniques.

As the worker tried to lift the telecommunications lid with a metal bar from the ground (to inspect inside), he felt a severe pain to his left shoulder, after which he immediately fell down. He was conscious, however he was unable to get up for some reason. The ambulance was called to the site, and at the time of call, worker was transported to hospital.

What treatment/s did the worker undergo, and how much time did the injured worker have away from work?

The worker was required to undergo surgical intervention (4 surgeries in total) to repair injured rotator cuffs. Lengthy and involved physiotherapy treatments were then required post-surgery. Whilst the initial injury occurred in November 2017 of his right shoulder, a further injury in Nov 2018 of his left shoulder subsequently occurred. The Worker has been on/off work since then throughout 2019 and 2020. The nominee commenced a graduated plan on suitable duties after his latest surgery which occurred in January 2021 and progressed towards his recent clearance which occurred in June 2021.

How did the nominee support the injured worker?

Apart from the usual return to work co-ordination and facilitating of suitable duties and general case management including ongoing communication among the stakeholders, the nominee arranged the following;

- Provided home support.
- Enrolled the worker into online training courses.
- Redefined work practices.

- Arranged a different ongoing role at work which required less physical activity but ensured a sense of value.
- Supported the worker 24/7 outside of work hours when employee was struggling with his mental health.
- Maintained regular contact with the worker and his family.
- Educated his work peers and communicated strategies to help the transition back to the workplace.
- Performed extra consultations, conferences, follow up phone calls and worksite visits.

What leadership factors did the nominee actively demonstrate throughout the process?

- The nominee listened closely to the worker and remained receptive to ideas and to learn from his approach.
- She never gave up on the worker. Nancy did her best in every situation which highlighted her strong work ethic and her focus on excellence.
- The nominee took a lead role to identify gaps within the project operations and then suggesting the business make reasonable changes to his role to mitigate any future injuries/aggravations.
- She then collaborated with the business to develop a role that would ensure sustainability for the worker but also productivity and efficiencies for the business.
- She maintained communication with all parties, by arranging regular face to face meetings, and providing updated information where required. When managing such a protracted case clarity in communication became essential. She conveyed her messages as precisely as possible. Nonverbal communication helped with the worker as he responded well to gestures and body language to emphasize key statements which gave her messages a greater impact.
- Nancy took responsibility for both successful outcomes and some mistakes made by the worker along the case management journey.
- Nancy undertakes projects proactively and approaches her work positively, which motivated others to do the same. She included her entire team in the injury management process including meetings and key decisions. She identified key strengths and embraced diversity to avoid limiting the team's growth. By considering other team members viewpoints, she built a more capable team in the process and a more trusting worker.
- She had to exhibit resilience, flexibility and adaptability due to the large number of state border closures which resulted in her being isolated and locked down numerous times due to her need to travel interstate.

How did the nominee overcome any barriers experienced throughout the rehabilitation and return to work process?

The employee in the beginning was hesitant to engage in the RTW process and was not an active participant. He was concerned that his peers might think he was overstating how much the injury was affecting him. This assumption was based on historical negative experiences with his line managers, which made him extremely cautious and closed to the nominee's support in the recovery journey.

Nancy by building a rapport and gaining the worker's trust, through consistent communication, goal setting and general human conversation, was able to build the relationship to a point where the worker knew that she was working towards the goal of him returning to health and work and having a quality of life that he had pre-injury. Once she proved he could trust her and had kicked some of the goals they had put in place, the journey towards his recovery and a clearance to return to work became much more positive.

As the case was protracted with multiple similar events the worker was worried, they would re-injure themselves if they go back to work too early. Nancy provided a number of confidence building measures which included an agreed plan and schedule along with scientific fact sharing about rotator cuff injury recovery.

The worker also lacked confidence about the marketability and transferability of his skill set to other duties. A skill gap analysis and physical demand assessment performed by Nancy on the new duties negated these concerns quickly. Whilst there were no residual stress factors that may have contributed to the injury in the first instance reluctance and hesitance did exist and was only natural given the fact there were multiple events. The humanitarian nature of the nominee gained the trust of the worker quickly and effectively resulting in a return to work.

How did the nominee's contribution to the rehabilitation and return to work process improve the outcome for the worker?

The nominee went above and beyond with the RTW process. Due to the longevity of the rehabilitation (Since 2017) the worker suffered mental health issues which required the nominee to make herself available 24/7 for the worker. This provided a level of confidence and trust and a support base which ultimately produced a great result. The conversation about finding a solution together between the nominee and the worker started as soon as possible after the series of injuries had happened. This occurred because the nominee ascertained quickly that the worker had little interests outside of work and had limited family or peer support networks. She identified early how much the worker wanted to get back to work and how much the second incident effected his confidence. She established how well the worker understood their injury and medical treatment. By developing a person centric plan and listening to the needs of the worker, identifying the restrictions and barriers and finding solutions to remove these barriers and road blocks, allowed the worker to focus on his rehabilitation and recovery which played a massive role on the success of his return to work. Being able to develop reasonable adjustments and working with his managers, the nominee was able to get the worker back to a productive and more efficient role than what he was doing prior to the injuries. It was all about instilling confidence and trust back into the worker, so he had a level of buy-in and an active role to play in his own return to work. Due to the professional, collaborative and in some cases conciliatory approach by the nominee, there were no disagreements between the worker and their employer over workplace rehabilitation and return to work or suitable duties plans.

As demonstrated evidence to the above claim, I am not allowed to disclose the identity of the worker highlighted in the response to Criteria 3, however I would like to refer the attention of the judging panel to the author of the testimonial listed in Section 1 - Mr Geoff Bell - Lendlease Construction Supervisor. He is willing to verify all the similar circumstances surrounding the supportive claims outlined within this submission and is very supportive of this nomination.

Whilst this Section relates to an example of the rehabilitation and return to work of an injured worker, I wish to highlight the capacity of the nominee to influence workers in a positive manner which avoids injury or the need to return to work in the first instance. As the Road Operations Manager of a business that provides first response to fatal and serious injury motor vehicle accidents to various Brisbane motorways and an employer of Veterans and ex Emergency Service personnel that suffer from PTSD, I am proud to say that through the great work of Nancy, being proactive in injury avoidance, we have managed to maintain Zero TRIFR within the team. A great result for a team that describes themselves as "broken biscuits" and describes Nancy as "the Baker". My staff have nicked named her "the Baker" because in their words "she can make broken biscuits feel valued". For anybody that can have that effect on people, they truly deserve, not only be nominated but awarded with a similar sense of value.